

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 2, 4-23, 25-30, and 35 are currently pending. Claim 24 has been canceled without prejudice; and Claims 1 and 25 have been amended by the present amendment. The changes to the claims are supported by the originally filed specification and do not add new matter.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1-11, 15-17, 22-30 and 35 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,522,421 to Chapman et al. (“the ‘421 patent”) in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/018751 to Shen (hereinafter “the ‘951 application”), further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,614,551 to Peek (hereinafter “the ‘551 patent”); and Claims 12-14 and 18-21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over the ‘421 patent, the ‘951 application, and the ‘551 patent, further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,920,404 to Weiser (hereinafter “the ‘404 patent”).

Amended Claim 1 is directed to an apparatus, comprising: (1) a communication unit configured to receive an e-mail through a communication line from a remote site, the e-mail having been sent by a user and including a first identifier identifying the user and the data, the communication unit being connected to the Internet and configured to receive the e-mail from the Internet; (2) an accumulation unit configured to store the data; (3) a printout unit; (4) an input unit configured to receive a second identifier entered by a user through a direct operation thereof at a local site where the apparatus is installed; and (5) a control unit configured to control the printout unit to print the data corresponding to the first identifier at the local site by reading the data from the accumulation unit if the second identifier matches the first identifier. Further, Claim 1 recites that the accumulation unit includes a private accumulation unit and an output accumulation unit. Further, Claim 1 has been amended to

clarify that the control unit is further configured to check whether the e-mail is provided with the first identifier, configured to store the data of the e-mail including the first identifier in the private accumulation unit selected in response to a result of the check so as to control, in response the results of the check, the printout unit to print the data corresponding to the first identifier at the local site by reading the data from the private accumulation unit if the second identifier matches the first identifier, and configured to store data of the e-mail failing to include the first identifier in the output accumulation unit selected in response to the result of this check so as to control, in response to the result of the check, the printout unit to print the data stored in the output accumulation unit at the local site immediately after the storing of the data in the output accumulation unit.

Regarding the rejection of Claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 103, the Office Action asserts that the '421 patent discloses everything in Claim 1 with the exception of the input unit, the control unit, and the communication unit being connected to the Internet, and relies on the '951 application and the '551 patent to remedy those deficiencies.

The '421 patent is directed to a method and apparatus for automatically communicating status information of a document production job by a printer. As shown in Figure 2, the '421 patent discloses a method in which an application file is sent to a printer, the printer detects an e-mail address and processes the application file to produce a printed document. Further, the '421 patent discloses that an e-mail message indicating the status of the document reproduction job is then sent from the printer.

However, Applicants respectfully submit that the '421 patent fails to disclose a communication unit configured to receive an e-mail through a communication line from a remote site. Rather, the '421 patent merely discloses the sending of a file that includes "e-mail information," such as e-mail addresses to which the printer will send back status information. Thus, the '421 patent does not disclose a system in which the printer receives an

e-mail, but merely discloses receiving a file that contains e-mail addresses that indicate the recipients of the e-mail that the printer eventually sends.

Moreover, as admitted in the outstanding Office Action, the '421 patent fails to disclose the input unit and the control unit recited in Claim 1. In particular, Applicants respectfully submit that the '421 patent fails to disclose a control unit that is configured to check whether the e-mail is provided with the first identifier, configured to store the data of the e-mail including the first identifier in the private accumulation unit selected in response to the result of the check so as to control, in response to a result of the check, the printout unit to print the data corresponding to the first identifier at the local site by reading the data from the private communication unit if the second identifier matches the first identifier, and configured to store data of the e-mail failing to include the first identifier in said output accumulation unit selected in response to the result of the check so as to control, in response to the result of the check, the printout unit to print the data stored in the output accumulation unit at the local site immediately after storing the data in the output accumulation unit, as recited in amended Claim 1. The '421 patent fails to disclose a control unit configured to check whether the e-mail is provided with a first identifier, and configured to store data in one of two locations based on a result of the check, as recited in Claim 1.

The '951 application is directed to a system used by a printing device to print a document. In particular, as shown in Figures 5 and 8, the '951 application discloses a system in which an e-mail message is created, the message including a rendered print job, a pin code, and a security code which is sent to the mailbox corresponding to an e-mail address. Further, the '951 application discloses that, after the user enters an e-mail address, an account name, and a pin code, the system displays a list of documents corresponding to the entered e-mail address and the user selects a document (email) from the list. The '951 application also discloses that a document is printed after the user optionally enters a security code that is

associated with the document. However, Applicants respectfully submit that the '951 application fails to disclose the control unit recited in Claim 1. In particular, the '591 application fails to disclose a control unit configured to check whether the e-mail is provided with a first identifier, configured to store the data of the e-mail including the first identifier in a private accumulation unit selected in response to a result of the check so as to control, in response to the result of the check, the printout unit to print the data corresponding to the first identifier at the local site by reading the data from the private accumulation unit. Further, the '951 application fails to disclose a control unit configured to store data of the e-mail failing to include the first identifier in the output accumulation unit selected in response to the result of the check so as to control, in response to the result of the check, the printout unit to print the data stored in the output accumulation unit, as recited in amended Claim 1. Rather, the '951 application merely discloses that the e-mail is stored in various mailboxes on the server computer. The '951 application does not disclose storing the data of the e-mail in either the private accumulation unit or the output accumulation unit based on a check of whether the e-mail is provided with the first identifier, as recited in Claim 1.

The '551 patent is directed to a fax machine capable of sending and receiving image data by e-mail. In particular, the '551 patent discloses that the fax machine is configured to send and receive e-mail messages over the Internet. However, Applicants respectfully submit that the '551 patent fails to disclose the control unit configured to check whether an e-mail is provided with the first identifier, and configured to store the data of the e-mail based on the result of the check, as recited in amended Claim 1.

Thus, no matter how the teachings of the '421 patent, the '951 application, and the '551 patent are combined, the combination does not teach or suggest a control unit configured to check whether the e-mail is provided the first identifier, configured to store the data of the e-mail including the first identifier in the private accumulation unit selected in

response to a result of the check, and configured to store the data of the e-mail failing to include the first identifier in the output accumulation unit selected in response to the result of the check, as recited in amended Claim 1. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection of Claim 1 (and all similarly rejected dependent claims) is rendered moot by the present amendment to Claim 1.

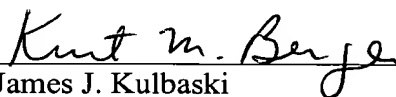
Regarding the rejection of dependent Claims 12-14 and 18-21 under 35 U.S.C. § 103, Applicants respectfully submit that the '404 patent fails to remedy the deficiencies of the '421 patent, the '951 application, and the '551 patent, as discussed above. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejections of dependent Claims 12-14 and 18-21 are rendered moot by the present amendment to Claim 1.

Thus, it is respectfully submitted that independent Claim 1 (and all associated dependent claims) patentably defines over any proper combination of the '421 patent, the '951 application, 'the 551 patent, and the '404 patent.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment and in light of the above discussion, the outstanding grounds for rejection are believed to have been overcome. The application as amended herewith is believed to be in condition for formal allowance. An early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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